

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00314 161648Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DODE-00 PM-05 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 /023 W

-----022995 161846Z /47

R 161320Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6464
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 0314

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIN, MORG, SY
SUBJECT: NEW REGULATIONS PERMITTING CERTAIN SYRIAN CITIZENS
ABROAD TO BUY OFF MILITARY SERVICE

1. ON JANUARY 15, 1978 PARLIAMENT APPROVED A PRESIDENTIAL
DECREE PERMITTING SYRIAN NATIONALS EMPLOYED IN SAUDI ARABIA,
KUWAIT, THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, BAHRAIN, QATAR AND OMAN
TO BE EXCUSED FROM MILITARY SERVICE UPON PAYMENT OF US DOLS
5,000. THE APPLICATION MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY ADEQUATE
PROOF THAT THE APPLICANT IS INDEED PERMANENTLY RESIDENT
IN ONE OF THESE COUNTRIES.

2. COMMENT: THIS REGULATION AFFECTS APPROXIMATELY
200-300,000 SYRIANS REPORTEDLY WORKING IN THE ARABIAN
PENINSULA. (THE SAUDI EMBASSY IN DAMASCUS ESTIMATES
THERE ARE 200,000 SYRIANS WORKING IN SAUDI ARABIA
ALONE.) THIS MEASURE SHOULD NOT AFFECT THE
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AVAILABILITY OF RECRUITS FOR THE SYRIAN ARMY.
VIRTUALLY NONE OF THE WORKERS IN THE PENINSULA RETURN
TO DO MILITARY SERVICE, ALTHOUGH MANY HAD COMPLETED
MILITARY SERVICE PRIOR TO LEAVING SYRIA. THE GREATEST
BENEFIT THE WORKERS WILL GAIN FROM THIS MEASURE WILL
BE THE RIGHT TO RETURN AND VISIT THEIR FAMILIES WITHOUT
CONCERN OF BEING DRAFTED. IF EFFECTIVE, IT SHOULD REPRESENT

A FAIRLY LARGE ONE-TIME FOREIGN EXCHANGE WINDFALL FOR THE SYRIAN
GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE TO ESTIMATE US DOLS 100
MILLION AS A MINIMUM FIGURE FOR THIS WINDFALL.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 16 jan 1978
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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